DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 187 209 HE 012 631

AUTHOR Morgan, David M.
TITLE The Re-Emergence of State Postsecondary and Higher Education Goals. ASHE Annual Meeting 1980 Paper.
PUB DATE Mar 80
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (Washington, DC, March 4-5, 1980).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Accountability; Educational Assessment; *Educational Objectives; *Higher Education; *Postsecondary Education; State Programs; *Statewide Planning
IDENTIFIERS *ASHE Annual Meeting 1980; *Georgia

ABSTRACT

The need for goals in postsecondary and higher education is discussed. It is suggested that the development of statewide goals can serve as a means of making postsecondary education accountable to the public without resort to increased control and regulation. The process being used in Georgia to develop statewide goals for postsecondary education, and problems that have been encountered, are considered. During the past two decades several efforts were made to develop goals at national and regional levels. Because the bulk of the control and funding of postsecondary education is at the state level, it is at that level that goals can have their greatest impact. It is claimed that the emphasis on goal setting has not led to clear definition of purposes, processes, and results of higher and postsecondary education. In Georgia a step-by-step process has been followed that began with the development of goals and objectives, has moved to the identification of indicators, and will continue on to assessment, recommendations, and public reporting. Details of the process are presented. A list of states and the status of their goal development activities is included. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED187209

THE RE-EMERGENCE OF STATE POSTSECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION GOALS

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

David Morgan

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

By

David M. Morgan

HE 012 631

A Paper Prepared For

The Association for the Study of Higher Education
Washington Hilton Hotel

March 4-5, 1980

The fact that a panel discussed statewide higher education goals at the Washington Hilton this afternoon will not likely be reported in tomorrow's Washington Post. Neither are we apt to see Mark Russell in the audience today, gathering material for his satirical review of national and local events. In fact, I wonder how many of you are actually in the right place. The fact that the topic of state goals for higher education does not sound particularly relevant or promising may be because too many of the statewide goals with which we are familiar are not themselves particularly relevant or promising.

No, goal setting is not currently a zippy topic, and the view of this paper is that while goals have become pervasive in our society, one of the main functions of statewide postsecondary goals has not yet been achieved -- wide understanding of the purposes, processes, and outcomes of postsecondary education. Further, the development of statewide goals can serve as a means of making postsecondary education accountable to the public without a resort to increased control and regulation. Finally, this paper will review how these ideas have influenced the process being used in Georgia to develop statewide goals for postsecondary education, and will look at the problems that have been encountered. Although the topic of this session is state level higher education goals, this paper has primarily focused on postsecondary education, which is the focus of the goal setting activity in Georgia. It appears that the points addressed in this paper would apply to both.

We are all familiar with the concept of goals. We can agree that goals are ideals, something to strive for, the reach that exceeds the grasp. Carl Schurz wrote, "Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands. But like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you will reach your destiny" (Wriston, 1960, p. 39). Perhaps a bit dramatic for educators, but we generally are in agreement as to what goals are.

Goal setting has become a national pastime. Encouraged by management and organization writers and theorists, we have seen the advent of a number of systems theories such as management by objectives, program planning and budgeting, and zero-based budgeting, all of which place importance on goal setting.

This national fervor for goals has spilled over into postsecondary education. During the past two decades several efforts were made to develop goals at national and regional levels. In 1960 a set of national goals for America was developed by a Commission ("Report to the President's Commission") appointed by President Eisenhower. As part of the Commission's report, John Gardner stated some 25 goals for education, more than half of which concerned higher education. Included were goals related to more federal aid for medical education, a study of the future needs of higher education, a separate Department of Education at the cabinet level, and more student financial aid.

Following this national effort, the Southern Regional Education Board in 1961 convened a Commission on Goals for Higher Education in the South, which reported five broad goals and 28 objectives in its report Within Our Reach. These broad goals addressed: individual opportunity for education; creation of responsive citizens; achievement of excellence in teaching, research, and service; acceleration of the economic progress of the region; and assistance to the region in solving social problems.

While these and other efforts were important in focusing attention on pressing issues, their greatest value was in encouraging states to develop their own sets of statewide goals. Because the bulk of the control and funding of postsecondary education is at the state level, it is at that level that the use of goals should have their greatest impact. In a 1979 survey by the

Georgia Governor's Committee on Postsecondary Education, 43 states reported either that they had statewide goals or had them under development. Of the 32 states which had developed statewide goals by 1979, a majority (24) applied these goals to all of postsecondary education as opposed to eight which applied them only to higher education.

It would seem with this much goals development occurring that there would be within each state and at the national level clear definition of purposes, processes, and results of higher and postsecondary education. This has not been the case and in recent years we have heard a clamor for new goals.

For example, in 1976, the Southern Regional Education Board followed up its earlier goals with the development of nine priorities for postsecondary education in the South. Its first priority stated that the "need for planning is intensified by the confusion of educational goals and activities now evident in the competing demands of institutions and clienteles" (p. 5).

Ernest Boyer, former United States Commissioner of Education, now president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, indicated recently that one of the first actions of the Foundation, in following up the work of the Carnegie Council and Carnegie Commission, would likely be in the area of goals of colleges and universities (Scully, 1980).

Coming full cycle, President Carter has recently appointed a commission to identify goals and priorities for this decade. The President has named nine college officials to the 29-member President's Commission for a National Agenda for the Eighties.

Therefore it seems that a contradiction exists. On the one hand numerous statements of goals exist at the national, regional, and state levels. On the other hand the re-emerging call for goals noted above indicates that current

goals are not serving their purposes adequately. The explanation for this contradition may lie in the fact that goal statements have rarely been tied clearly to processes for reporting progress toward the achievement of those goals. In its survey the Georgia Governor's Committee found that only twelve states had stated specific objectives or sub-goals based upon their broad goals, and only two had developed specific indicators of progress for their goals. While a number of states do issue periodic reports on their progress in goal achievement, the lack of specific objectives or sub-goals and progress indicators would seem to imply that such reports may not be objectively and directly tied to the goals.

Several recent reports have expressed a similar idea. In 1979 the Fifty-sixth American Assembly noted that the "public perception is that a certain malaise affects higher education." Its report contended that "public confidence in American higher education has been eroded in recent years." The Assembly indicated that the "failure to address the problems forthrightly and imaginatively will have serious negative effects on the integrity of universities and colleges" (p. 4). One recommendation made by this group is that "higher education institutions should state their goals explicitly and devise methods for periodic reporting of both their accomplishments and shortcomings to the public as related to those goals" (p. 6).

The National Task Force on the Accountability of Higher Education to the State (1979), formed by the Education Commission of the States (ECS), indicated that higher education faces a critical crossroads: Either it could find its own ways to be accountable to the state, or the state would make higher education more accountable through increased controls, regulation, centralization, and bureaucracy.

Those familiar with the recent history of higher education and its increasing control and regulation at the state and national levels recognize that this is no empty threat. The number of statewide statutory coordinating or central governing boards has increased dramatically in the past two decades, and many observers have noted that the trend toward an increase of governing boards as opposed to coordinating boards is ominous. The most recent of these is the final report of the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education (1980), Three Thousand Futures, which noted that higher education is in transition from being a largely self-governing, autonomous part of American society to being a regulated industry" (p. 14).

The ECS Task Force (National Task Force, 1979) believed that this accountability process would require a new approach. Although it might include one or more of the following, it must be more comprehensive than any one of these: sunset legislation, performance audits, evaluation as part of the budget cycle, state agency review of new and existing academic programs, minimum standards for licensure of institutions, and voluntary accreditation.

The task force said that, to be comprehensive, an accountability process should include setting goals for higher education, measuring progress in relation to those goals, and reporting to the people of the state through the responsible state authorities the degree of attainment of the goals.

Thus the goal development process in many states appears to be incomplete, having failed to follow through in the manner suggested by the ECS task force. Perhaps, one is able to observe how seriously a state takes its goals by how broad-based their development is, whether progress indicators exist and are used in assessing and reporting goal achievement, and whether the goals have an impact on the operations of institutions.

In Georgia we have attempted to respond to these ideas by using a methodical, step by step process. It began with the development of goals and objectives, has moved to the identification of indicators, and will continue on to assessment, recommendations, and public reporting.

In Georgia, postsecondary education is defined to include public colleges and universities, private colleges and universities, proprietary schools and colleges, and public vocational-technical schools. The Georgia constitution provides for a Board of Regents to govern and control the University System of Georgia, which consists of 15 junior colleges, 14 senior colleges, and 4 universities. Thus, except for one locally controlled junior college, all 33 public higher education institutions in the state are governed by this board. The State Board of Education is responsible for authorizing the operation of private non-profit colleges in the state, of which there are 34, and the approval of proprietary schools and colleges, numbering well over 100. The State Board of Education also provides funding and policy guidelines for the state's 26 area vocational-technical schools. Two schools are governed by the State Board of Education, and the remainder are governed by area and local boards.

In 1978 the Governor reorganized the state's 1202 commission, and named it the Governor's Committee on Postsecondary Education, appointing to it representatives of the four postsecondary sectors, lay members, local school officials, and business people. He charged the group with the identification of the major problems and issues facing postsecondary education during the next decade. Many of the agenda items for the 1980's reported back by the Committee (1979) would no doubt seem familiar to many other states: communication, efficient and effective use of resources, basic skills, adequacy of funding, work relevant programs, and effective budgeting.

However, one issue which had already been addressed by most other states was the need for statewide postsecondary education goals. The Committee felt that goal setting would provide a framework for addressing the other issues.

The Governor immediately followed up this report by naming a new, similarly composed group, with himself as chairman, to establish statewide postsecondary goals. The Governor specifically charged the new group with undertaking three activities: development of goals and objectives, identification of indicators, and assessment.

The Committee has approached its task seeking at every point the widest possible base of input and support. The Committee first reviewed the goals developed by other states before developing its working draft which it presented to reaction panels composed of representatives from postsecondary education, business and industry, the legislature, state agencies, student organizations, and citizen groups. Based upon the suggestions of these panels, the Committee revised its goals and objectives before sending them out for statewide review by 1,400 survey recipients and at seven regional hearings.

The Committee further modified the goals and objectives, based upon the statewide review, resulting in a statement of nine goals and 42 objectives. Included in those nine goals are references to accessibility, diversity, responsiveness, excellence of programs, individual development, excellence in educational leadership and institutional management, effectiveness and efficiency, communication and cooperation, and public awareness.

The indicator identification step began in January, 1980. Based upon institutional and citizen nominations, five Task Forces were formed, each chaired by a Committee member, and including representatives from each postsecondary sector, from business, industry, state agencies and citizen

groups. Each Task Force also included a representative of the University System and the Georgia Department of Education. Assisting these groups were representatives from the: American College Testing Program, College Board, Educational Testing Service, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools -- both both the Commission on Colleges and on Occupational Education Institutions -- and Southern Regional Education Board.

These Task Forces were asked to develop indicators for each objective which, when taken together, provide an objective means of appraising or assessing the status of postsecondary education relative to the objectives. For example, one objective for the goal of "Excellence in instruction, research, and service consistent with institutional missions," currently reads, "Systematic methods of evaluating the quality of instructional, research, and service programs." Some of the indicators developed for it include: "existence of program standards, existence of internal evaluation procedures, extent of utilization of external evaluation programs, and evidence of follow-up on evaluation activities."

Following the submission of the Task Forces' final reports on indicators in early March, the Committee will call for statewide review through both a survey and two public hearings.

The final activity called for by the Governor, an assessment process using these indicators, will begin later this spring. The Committee has tentatively approved a three-stage plan for assessment, which will extend through fiscal year 1981. These stages are, design of a coordinated plan of assessment, collection and analysis of the data, and review of the conclusions and recommendations by members of the indicators Task Forces as well as other appropriate groups.

The Committee's final report will be an analysis of where Georgia postsecondary education stands relative to the goals and objectives, and recommendations for actions which will assist postsecondary education in achieving these goals and objectives.

Therefore, the Committee has attempted to follow a process which responds to the need for public understanding of the purposes of postsecondary education by being broadly based, and which attempts to answer the need for accountability by tying its goals to indicators to be used in assessing and reporting progress toward goal achievement.

Nonetheless problems have arisen relative to its use in Georgia. The Committee has been aware of two contradictory attitudes expressed by some educators regarding the Committee's work -- apprehensiveness and disinterest. This apprehensiveness may in part result from the fact that the procedure is broadly based and does lead to accountability. The apprehensiveness appears to stem from educators' perceptions that information may be misinterpreted, that incorrect conclusions may be drawn from data, and that the work of the Committee may eventually lead to the creation of a statewide coordinating board. While it is not unnatural for normal people as well as educators to be apprehensive about external evaluation or assessment, it is interesting that some believe that the goal setting process might result in increased regulation and centralization -- the very result that this type of process as envisioned by the ECS task force is intended to avoid. It should also be noted that, while Georgia does not have a coordinating board, it does possess one of the most structually centralized governing boards in the nation, with virtually all public higher education governed by a single board.

Just as the Committee has noted apprehensiveness about the possible impact of its work, it has -- sometimes at the same time and by the same people -- noted a lack of interest in its work. This may be explained in several ways. Georgia is not alone in having had a multitude of advisory commissions on every topic from alcoholism to zoos. Often such groups are established merely to advance the notion that something is being done. Other such groups are established pro forma or for legal reasons, and often do little. The fact that the Committee has existed on a year-to-year basis has not enhanced the expectation that there will be significant impact resulting from follow-up work by a continuing advocacy group. For this reason, it appears more critical that in Georgia the design of the goals development be logical and methodical, inasmuch as it is possible it will, at some point, have to stand on its own merits.

However, this methodical, step-by-step approach being followed by the Committee may offer another possible explanation for disinterest. The earliest phase of the Committee's work lacked sex appeal. Because the Committee's goals were those that had been, to a great degree, already assumed over the years, they did not quicken the pulse. The next phase, indicator development, has aroused more interest, and we believe the assessment phase will be somewhat controversial.

Of course, the final test of whether the procedure has fulfilled its purposes, is whether the goals have an impact on the operations of postsecondary education. Obviously, we are not in a position at this point to evaluate the results of a process that has yet to be completed. However, several side benefits have been observed occurring as a result of the Committee's work to date. The Committee has helped the State and the postsecondary sectors focus on continuing and emerging postsecondary issues. Some groups have already begun

to react by making administrative and policy changes which respond to the Committee's work. One college president, for example, has announced his intention of replicating the Committee's goal development process at his institution.

In summary, the ECS task force has provided us with a noteworthy process which can have significant positive influence on the accountability in which we all find ourselves enmeshed. With the re-emergence of goal setting as part of our national and state agendas, we need to utilize this or similar processes to ensure that there is clear broad-based understanding and support of postsecondary education. Only through the use of systematic assessment and reporting to the public, can we avoid further regulation or excessive control of postsecondary education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education. Three thousand futures: The next twenty years for higher education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980.

Commission on Goals for Higher Education in the South. Within our reach. Atlanta: Southern Regional Education Board, 1961.

Fifty-sixth American Assembly. The integrity of higher education. New York: Columbia University, The American Assembly, 1979.

Fincher, C. Regional goals in higher education. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia, Institute of Higher Education, 1974.

Gardner, J. W. National goals in education. In Goals for Americans. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960.

Georgia Planning Association. Goals for Georgia: What the people said. Atlanta: Author, January 1972.

Governor's Commission to Improve Education. Educating Georgia's people: Investment in the future. Atlanta: Author, 1963.

Governor's Committee on Postsecondary Education. Postsecondary issues: Action agenda for the eighties. Atlanta: Author, June 1979.

National Task Force on the Accountability of Higher Education to the State. Accountability and academe. Denver: Education Commission of the States, July 1979.

The report of the President's Commission on National Goals. In Goals for Americans. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960.

Scully, M. G. After 13 years, the "Clark Kerr era" draws to a close. The Chronicle of Higher Education, February 11, 1980, pp. 5-6.

Southern Regional Education Board. Priorities for postsecondary education in the South. Atlanta: Author, September 1976.

Weatherford, W. D., Jr. (Ed.). The goals of higher education. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960.

Wriston, H. M. The individual. In Goals for Americans. Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1960.

A TABLE RELATED TO

THE RE-EMERGENCE OF STATE POSTSECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION GOALS

By

David M. Morgan

A Paper Prepared For

The Association for the Study of Higher Education
Washington Hilton Hotel

March 4-5, 1980

REVIEW OF STATEWIDE POSTSECONDARY

AND HIGHER EDUCATION GOALS

State	Status of Goals				Existing Goal Statements Include:		
			Goals Exist For:				
	No Goals	Goals Under Development	All Post-secondary Educ.	Only Higher Educ.	Broad Goals	Specific Obj. or Sub-goals	Progress * Indicators
Alabama		X					
Alaska		X					
Arkansas			X		8	16	
California			X		31		
Colorado			X		7	20	
Connecticut			X		7		
Delaware			X		4	25	
Florida			X		9		
Georgia		X					
Hawaii			X		1	5	
Idaho		X					
Illinois			X		5		
Indiana			X		4		
Iowa	X						
Kansas			X		7		
Kentucky				X	14		
Louisiana				X	8	30	
Maine	X						
Maryland			X		4		
Massachusetts	X						
Michigan			X		6		
Minnesota			X		8		
Mississippi	X						
Missouri			X		9		

State	Status of Goals				Existing Goal Statements Include:		
			Goals Exist For:				
	No Goals	Goals Under Development	All Post-secondary Educ.	Only Higher Educ.	Broad Goals	Specific Obj. or Sub-goals	Progress* Indicators
Montana			X		12		
Nebraska	X						
Nevada	X[1]						
New Hampshire			X		3	10	27
New Jersey			X		10		
New Mexico	X						
New York			X		5		
North Carolina				X	3		
North Dakota	X						
Ohio	X						
Oklahoma				X	31		
Oregon			X		3	32	
Pennsylvania			X		9		
Rhode Island			X		10	34	
South Carolina			X		8		53
South Dakota	X						
Tennessee			X		5	25	
Texas				X	1	6	
Utah				X	3		
Vermont			X		7		
Virginia				X	3	11	
West Virginia				X	4	20	
Wisconsin	X						
Wyoming		X					
TOTAL	11	5	24	8	30	12	2

Source: Fall 1979 survey of all states by Georgia Governor's Committee on Postsecondary Education. Arizona and Washington did not respond. Data compiled by Pauline D. Palmer.

*Note: In addition to or instead of progress indicators, many states call for periodic reports evaluating progress in achieving goals and objectives.

[1]Does have goals for public higher education.